AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLINE(tm) REPORT #1272 - DECEMBER 28 2001

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The Newsline Production Team

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Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1272 with a release date of Friday, December 28th, 2001 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T.

A not so welcome FCC Christmas present for several hams and an ARRL survey says that most hams no longer want the novice bands. These stories are first on this New Years week edition of the Amateur Radio Newsline coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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ENFORCEMENT: FCC DESIGNATES KEVIN MITNICK, N6NHG, LICENSE RENEWAL APPLICATION TO PUBLIC HEARING

A convicted computer hacker now has to face an FCC if he wants to keep his ham radio license. This, as the regulatory agency designates the Amateur Radio license renewal application of Kevin David Mitnick, N6NHG, for hearing. We have this report:

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According to the FCC, Kevin David Mitnick is best known to the world as a hacker who admitted that he broke into a number of computer systems and stole proprietary software belonging to Motorola, Novell, Fujitsu, Sun Microsystems and other companies. He has also admitted using a number of means to commit his crimes including social engineering, cloned cellular phones ad sniffer programs placed on a victims computer system. Mitnick even acknowledged altering the programming of computer systems belonging to the University of Southern California and using these computers to store programs that he had misappropriated.

Mitnick was sentenced to forty six months in federal prison for his August 9th

1999 conviction. He had previously been sentenced to twenty-two months in prison for possessing cloned cellular phones after his arrest in North Carolina in 1995 and for violating his supervised release that had been imposed after his conviction for unrelated computer fraud in 1989. He is currently on probation following his release from prison in January of 2001. And in December of 1999, Kevin David Mitnick, N6NHG, applied for renewal of his Amateur Radio Station and his General Class Operators License.

His license expired on December 12th 1999. The FCC put the renewal application on hold pending further inquiry. Now the agency has made public that it intends to challenge Mitnick's right to hold a ham radio license and has issued a Hearing Designation Order. In plain English, that means Kevin David Mitnick has to prove to the government why it should renew his ham ticket or have his license cancelled.

The FCC is challenging Mitnick's license renewal request on the ground that his past criminal behavior raises a substantial and material question as to whether Mitnick possesses what the it terms as the requisite character qualifications to remain a Commission licensee. The FCC says that in the context of broadcasting licenses, it has long held that evidence of any conviction for misconduct constituting a felony will be considered as relevant to its evaluation of an applicant's character. It also says that the broadcast character qualifications standards have been used as guidelines in the evaluation of non broadcast licenses including those in the Amateur Service and that the courts have upheld the Commission's right to do this.

The agency cites two recent cases. That of Herbert L. Schoenbohm, the ex-KV4FZ and Leslie Brewer who used to be KC4HAZ. Brewer, also known as the Tampa Party Pirate lost his ticket because of his unlicensed broadcasting in the commercial F-M band . Schoenbohm lost his based on a fraud conviction of using an unauthorized telephone access device. And the FCC says that any conviction for fraudulent conduct calls in question a licensee's ability to act in a manner consistent with FCC regulations.

And so the FCC has ordered that a hearing be held before an Administrative Law Judge to determine the effect of the criminal convictions of Kevin David Mitnick on his qualifications to be a Commission licensee. It also says that pursuant to provisions of the Communications Act, the burden will be on Kevin David Mitnick, N6NHG, to provide proof that his license renewal application should be granted. Mitnick was given 20 days of the mailing of the Hearing Designation Order to file a response.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline. I'm Andy Jarema, N6TCQ.

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The hearing designation order on Mitnick's license was adopted by the Commission on December 11th but not released until Friday, December 21st. Ironically, less than twenty-four hours earlier, Mitnick had made a guest appearance on Art Bell's Coast to Coast A-M where he discussed his future plans. At that time he was apparently unaware that the FCC had some plans of its own in regard to whether or not N6NHG will remain a radio amateur and Commission licensee.

The complete text of the Mitnick FCC Hearing Designation Order is on the web at: http://www.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2001/db1221/fcc01359.txt

(FCC)

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ENFORCEMENT: GERRITSON LICENSE PLACED ON HOLD PENDING POSSIBLE HEARING

Kevin Mitnick, N6NHG, is not the only person hearing from the FCC in recent days. So have a number of others including another Southern California resident who could face the same kind of a hearing. Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, is the FCC’s Special Counsel for Amateur Radio Enforcement:

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Hollingsworth: “We notified a Bell California licensee; Jack Gerritson, ex-KG6IRO, that the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, had set aside his Technician grant so that a recent conviction for radio interference could be evaluated. Now, he has no authority to operate Amateur Radio equipment until the matter is resolved.”
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The action to place Gerritson's license up for hearing was taken November 14, 2001 and is based in part upon complaints about the operation of his station and questions regarding Gerritson's qualifications to be a Commission licensee. The FCC says that both issues were raised as the result of Gerritson's 1999 arrest and year 2000 conviction for interference to police radio communications. (FCC)

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ENFORCEMENT: FCC REOPENS KY-W.VA REPEATER CASE

The FCC is also continuing its crackdown in the area of repeater interference issues. In fact it is taking a second look at a coordinated versus uncoordinated issue in the Tennessee and West Virginia border area. Again, Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH:

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Hollingsworth: “We notified parties in a repeater dispute in West Virginia that we would be reopening that case after information that one of the repeaters is coordinated after all. We had declined to intervene earlier this year in that case.”
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The letter stating that the FCC is reopening that case went to Michael Horn, KB8GDF, of Lenore West Virginia, Kenneth Brown KF8HL of Davin West Virginia and Carl Tussey, KB4UCE of South Williamson Kentucky. Back on January 24, 2001, had notified the three that it had received a complaint that they were operating an uncoordinated repeater on 145.390 MHz in Mingo County, West Virginia, and that this repeater was causing interference to the coordinated KC8FKP repeater operated by the Portsmouth Radio Club that uses the same frequency. The matter was closed when the FCC interpreted a notation in the South-Eastern Repeater Associations Repeater Journal that the status of the KC8FKP repeater was not known and interpreted this as meaning that the repeater was also was not coordinated.

But now the FCC says that it has recently come to it’s attention that although in the SERA Repeater Journal says that the KC8FKP repeater may be

listed as unknown, it is still a coordinated system. Therefore, the FCC is re-opening its review of the issues in this matter. (FCC)

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ENFORCEMENT: IS A GOVERNMENT AGENCY RUNNING A HAM REPEATER?

Is a government agency operating ham radio repeaters in violation of Part 97 rules? Specifically, the FCC wants to know who is really running the KD6LSO and W6SON repeaters in Sonoma County California.

The FCC says that it has received allegations that the county is in charge not the hams whose call signs appear on the machines. Since a county governmental entity cannot be an Amateur licensee, the FCC is collecting information in order to determine if there are breach of its rules. (FCC)

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BREAK 1

This is ham radio news coming to you from the United States of America. We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world, including Rocky Mountain Radio League repeaters serving Denver and Bloomfield Colorado.

(5 Sec Pause Here)

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RESTRUCTURING: ARRL STUDY SAYS NOVICE BANDS MAY NOT BE NEEDED

An ARRL study group has recommended doing away with the current novice bands and divvying them up among the remaining licenses classes. Amateur Radio Newsline’s Norm Seeley, KI7UP, has the details:

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An ARRL Novice Spectrum Study Committee has recommended that the League petition the FCC to eliminate the CW novice subbands. It also wants a rules change that will allow Novice and Technician licensees with element 1 credit to be permitted to operate Morse code on the General 80, 40, 15 and 10 meter C-W allocations at up to 200 watts power out.

These are just two of the suggestions contained in a report that will be presented to the Leagues Board of Directors when that group convenes in mid January. The study committee will also suggest recognizing portions of the 80, 40, 15 and 10 meter Morse bands for what it calls ''slow CW operation.'' The committee says that this would aid new operators in enhancing their Morse code skills.

Finally, the panel also recommends re-farming -- that’s another way of saying reapportioning -- reapportioning the current Novice and Tech Plus subbands in part. This, to allow expansion of the phone allocations on 80, 40 and 15 meters.

What will the ARRL Board of Directors do? We should know in less then a month.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I’m Norm Seeley, KI7UP

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The committee's determinations were based on opinions expressed by 4744 hams who respond to an ARRL Novice Spectrum Study survey launched last June. Those expressing their opinions included ARRL members and also non-members. What’s really interesting is that nearly 61% of those responding were Extra class licensees. (ARRL bulletin)

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FCC INSPECTOR GENERAL'S REPORT: THE NAMES THE SAME

The latest report of the FCC's Office of the Inspector General contained very few items of intrigue. But according to the C-G-C Communicator, one of the more colorful incidents involved a person who allegedly used the name of an FCC employee to obtain the government-rate for a hotel room in conjunction with a government-sponsored event.

Well, it turns out that the subject was legitimately attending the event, was entitled to the government room rate and just happened to have the same name as the FCC employee. The bottom line: Case dismissed.

The complete report is on the FCC website at http://www.fcc.gov/oig/Semiannual093001-1101.pdf (CGC Communicator)

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AMERICA AT WAR: NYC PHONE SERVICE STILL SPOTTY

It's been almost four months since the attack on the World Trade Center, and telephone service near ground zero in lower Manhattan is anything but normal.

According to news reports, repair people have restored service to most customers, but thousands of lines still aren't working. As a result, customers complain that some business lines can call out, but customers can't call in.

The collapse of Seven World Trade Center crushed thousands of underground cables at Verizon's nearby switching station. About 200-thousand telephone lines and three-point-five million data circuits were affected. The company says it'll spend as much as one-point-nine billion dollars to repair the damage. (Telecommunications Online)

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INTERNET SECURITY: PROBLEMS WITH XP

If you just bought a new computer equipped with the Microsoft X-P operating system, or have upgraded your old one, listen up. The Federal Bureau of Investigation says that you should take certain steps to protect yourself against hackers who might try to take advantage of major flaws that have been found in X-P.

The bureau's National Infrastructure Protection Center says that in addition to installing a free software fix offered by Microsoft on the company's Web site, consumers and corporations using Windows XP should disable the product's universal plug and play features as well. The FBI also warned computer system administrators to actively monitor for specific types of Internet traffic that might indicate an attack was under way.

The FBI did not provide detailed instructions how to disable plug and play. Outside experts also caution that disabling the affected Windows XP features threatens to render unusable an entire category of high-tech devices about to go on the market. This includes a new class of computer printers that are easier to set up. But the same experts also acknowledge that disabling plug and play in X-P could afford some protection against similar flaws discovered in the future.

Microsoft considers disabling plug and play options as being unnecessary but the company does acknowledge that Windows X-P suffers from serious problems that can let hackers steal or destroy data files across the Internet or implant their own unwanted software. The FBI says that the glitches were unusually serious because they allow hackers to seize control of all Windows X-P operating system software without requiring a computer user to do anything except connect to the Internet. (Published news reports)

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THE LAW: A FIGHT AGAINST GRAY MARKET ELECTRONICS

A group of American high-tech companies is opening the year 2002 with a campaign to protect consumers from unwittingly buying consumer electronic products intended for foreign markets. Electronics that the manufacturers claim may not work in the United States.

Compaq Computer is one of the companies involved in the campaign. It says that the group will warn consumers about the dangers of buying such products, and how to avoid getting duped. The other companies in the group are Hewlett-Packard, 3 Com, Nortel Networks, and Xerox. The effort may prompt more lawsuits against distributors who resell so called gray market items in the United States. (Computer Products Daily)

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SPECIAL EVENTS: USS ARIZONA K7A A SUCCESS

Steve Gurley, KJ7WK the coordinator of the USS Arizona Special Events Station K7A tells the Amateur Radio Newsline that the event was an overwhelming success. Gurley says that the memorial station contacted amateurs in all 50 states, and 8 other countries while handling over 2600 QSO's. In fact says KJ7WK, the sponsoring group has already received certificate requests from 609 stations as we go to air. There were ten operators in three counties in the Phoenix Arizona metroplex operational during most of the three days K7A was on the air. (KJ7WK)

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SCHOLARSHIPS: DARA SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 2002

The Dayton Amateur Radio Association says that the nominating period for its annual scholarship program is now open. The deadline to receive applications is June 1, 2002 and the announcement of winners will occur around June 15, 2002. Applications are available from the DARA Scholarship Committee, 9873 Lower Valley Pike, Medway, Ohio 45341. Please note that this is a new address from years past. Again it is the DARA Scholarship Committee, 9873 Lower Valley Pike, Medway, Ohio 45341. Also, for more information on the Dayton Amateur Radio Association and its programs, please visit www.dara-w8bi.com on the world wide web. (DARA)

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AWARDS: DARA OPENS NOMINATIONS FOR HAM OF THE YEAR

The Dayton Amateur Radio Association also asks that we remind you that the nominating period for the 2002 Dayton Hamvention Awards is now open. There are three awards presented each year. They are the Radio Amateur of the Year, Special Achievement, and Technical Excellence.

All amateurs Novice through Extra are eligible. Awards are decided by the Awards Committee, based partially upon the information received. Magazine articles, newsletters, newspaper clippings, videos and the like are appreciated but cannot be returned. The deadline for nominations is January 31, 2002. Nominations should be sent to Post Office Box 964, Dayton Ohio 45401. They can also be submitted by completing the e-form on the web at www.hamvention.org. (DARA)

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BREAK 2

News never takes a holiday and neither do we. Ringing in the New Year from the United States of America, we are the Amateur Radio Newsline, with links to the world from our only official website - www.arnewsline.org.

(5 sec pause here)

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CHANGING OF THE GUARD: BADGER STATE SMOKE SIGNALS EDITOR JIM ROMALFANGER, K9ZZ - SK

I’m Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF.

The ham who put the state of Wisconsin on the ham radio map has passed away. This, with word that Jim Romelfanger, K9ZZ died Saturday evening December 22nd of an apparent heart attack..

According to Romalfanger’s close friend Ken Ebneter, K9EN, Jim has been in declining health for some time. Romalfanger had a stroke a few weeks ago, affecting his right arm which was already weakened by polio. But Ebneter says that K9ZZ seemed to be improving until just recently. Ebneter says that Romalfanger had been in the hospital early last week but was home when he passed away of an apparent heart attack. In fact, K9ZZ had stopped by to visit a ham radio friend that afternoon. Another friend found him dead that evening

when he stopped by to visit.

His full name was Arthur James Louis Romelfanger but to the world of ham radio he was Jim, K9ZZ. And Jim Romalfanger made Wisconsin a ham radio household word by editing as three decade state-wide ham radio monthly newspaper called Badger State Smoke Signals -- and doing so as a volunteer.

Notice we said newspaper and not newsletter. This is because Smoke Signals is just that. A newspaper that at its peak ran up to 40 pages filled with articles about ham radio in the Badger State. In addition to being the 32 year editor of Smoke Signals, Romalfanger was nationally published over the years in CQ, QST, 73, Ham Radio, Popular Electronics, and other magazines.

Jim Romalfanger was first licensed January 1958 in Pacific Beach, California, as KN6LWB. Upgraded to General in May of 1958. He returned to Wisconsin that summer and became K9PKQ. In 1977, changed call to K9ZZ and held that call sign the rest of his life. Funeral services were scheduled for Friday, December 27th at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Baraboo Wisconsin.

Jim, from all of your friends at the Amateur Radio Newsline: We are going to miss you. (The Baraboo News Republic, K9EN, WB9QZB, and other friends of K9ZZ contributed to this report.)

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AMAZING DISCOVERIES: CIRCLES WITHIN A CIRCLE

One of the most curious pure mathematical discoveries for 2001 was announced in the easy-to-read article at an incredibly long website. In brief the article says that research has led to some remarkable geometric findings involving interrelationships between tangent circles and spheres. In other words, mysterious circles within a circle.

As one researcher put it, "Where do these numbers come from? What's going on here?" Find out by going to www.sciencenews.org/20010421/bob18.asp (CGC Communicator)

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INTERENATIONAL - CANADA: NEW ALBERTA SM

On the international front, word that Thomas Martens, VE6TRM, has been appointed the new Radio Amateurs of Canada Section Manager for the province of Alberta and the North West Territories. Martens replaces Alan Faint VE6QQ will be stepping down from the position due to personal reasons. Martens will serve the remainder of Faint’s term which runs through June 30th, 2003. (RAC)

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INTERNATIONAL-AUSTRALIA: CSIRO MICROTURBINES

Australian hospitals, restaurants and schools could soon source clean, reliable energy from mini power generators that operate independent of the main grid. This as CSIRO has installed Australia's first commercial microturbine, at their North Ryde Laboratory, Sydney.

The size of a small refrigerator, the turbine produces 30 kilowatts of power, independent of the electricity grid. And it does this with reduced greenhouse and other gas emissions. Thirty kilowatts is enough to power a medium commercial building such as a restaurant.

Along with fuel cells, gas engines, storage technologies and some renewable technologies, microturbines can be used to generate power close to the end-user and provide major gains in reliability and power quality. Once the design can trickle down to the home user level and price range, it could offer hams a way of always having emergency power always at hand. (Q-News)

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SHORTWAVE MONITORING : RADIO NORWAY CLOSES

The Board of Directors of the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation has decided to stop its own programs by Radio Norway International. This is effective as of December 31st of 2001.

According to DF5SX and G3VGW, Radio Norway's final show was hosted by veteran broadcaster Einar Lie on New Years Eve. Also, the 1200 kilowatt Medium Wave transmitter on 1314 kHz on Kvitsoy was supposed to cease operation by December the 31st as well.

The Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation will have to negotiate with transmitter providers Norkring and Radio Denmark to close down as well. The Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation and Norkring have a contract for running the transmissions that goes through December 31st, 2003. The agency also has a leasing agreement with Radio Denmark for the same period. (Media Network)

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DX

In D-X, keep an ear open for King George Island in the South Shetland group. HFZ0POL is reported on all H-F bands, including the newer ones, using CW, SSB, RTTY and PSK31. QSL HF0POL via SQ5TA.

And the United Arab Emerates has been heard lately A61AJ. He has been QRV on 40 meters CW around 1400 UTC. Q-S-L A61AJ via N4QB. (Various DX sources)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: RILEY SAYS THANKS

And finally as the year 2001 comes to an end, the FCC's Chief Rules enforcer, Riley Hollingsworth has some words of praise for the ham radio community. He passed them along through his bi-weekly Enforcement Log at www.rainreport.com, and thanks to them, we have is words for you:

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Hollingsworth: "I would like to point out Hap, that this is the end of the third year of Amateur Radio enforcement and I will honestly say that the overall level of compliance in the Amateur Radio Service is outstanding. The Amateur licensees do a great job and they do a great job of showing that the

Amateur Radio Service is -- indeed -- the only fail-safe communications system in the world and we are very proud of them."
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And if I can take off my reporters hat for a moment and editorialize a bit, I guess I speak for many who truly appreciate what you have done to return the Amateur Radio bands to the law abiding members of the nations ham radio community. (ARNewsline(tm), RAIN)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, Amateur News Weekly, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB and Australia's Q-News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline @arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Don Wilbanks, KC5MFA, saying Happy 2002, God Bless America, and we thank you for listening."
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